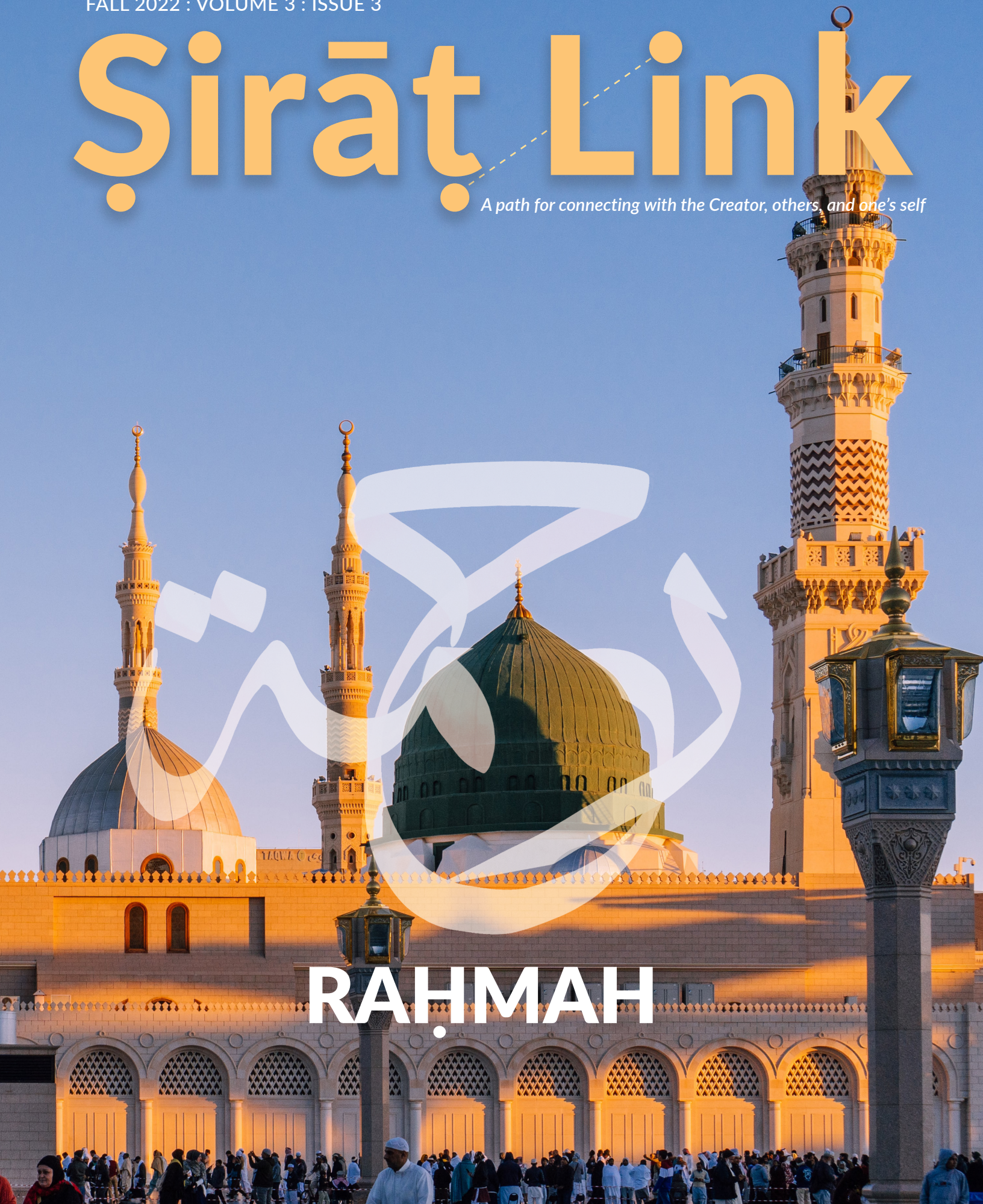
FALL 2022 : VOLUME 3 : ISSUE 3

Ṣirāṭ Link

A path for connecting with the Creator, others, and one's self



RAḤMAH

Letter from MOULANA ABIDI

Salāmun ʿAlaykum,

May Allah (swt) bless us, our families, and our communities. My congratulations, blessings, and best wishes to the Imām of our time, Imām al-Mahdī (ʿaj), our great leaders (marājiʿ) and scholars, and to the Muslim nation (ummah) on the birth anniversary (wilādah) of the best human being ever created on this Earth, the hope and mercy of the worlds, the perfect example and role model for all of humankind - the final Messenger of Islam, Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ), and on the birth anniversary (wilādah) of his sixth successor, Imām Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa).

Imagine if someone who knows your father, such as a neighbor, a business partner, or a friend, comes to you and says: "I know your father and I admire him. I want to organize a birthday celebration for him." How would that make you feel? The connection they have with your father will give you energy, happiness, and a passion that is unimaginable.

Today we are celebrating a Prophet to whom we are all connected. The Noble Prophet (ṣ) said that he and ʿAlī (ʿa) are the fathers of the Muslim nation (ummah)! Today, when I talk about the Noble Prophet of Islam (ṣ) or Imām ʿAlī (ʿa), I am talking about our role models (uswah), and our heroes that we need to follow

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Ṣirāṭ Link
A 2nd Chance Books Publication

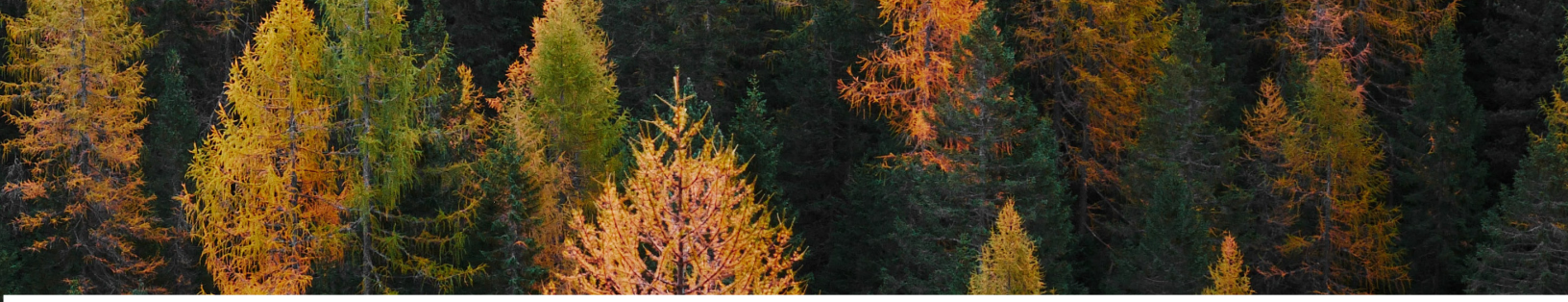
وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ
مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا

For the love of Him, they feed the needy, the orphan, and the prisoner.
(Noble Qurʾān 76:8)

2nd Chance Books is a non-profit organization that was founded in order to assist incarcerated Muslims by providing them with educational materials, tools for rehabilitation, and a support system. By responding to their numerous questions about Islam, they gain a more thorough understanding of the religion. So far, 2nd Chance has distributed over 20,000 books to inmates across the country.

Among 2nd Chance's most recent initiatives is Ṣirāṭ Link, a quarterly magazine. The title Ṣirāṭ Link, inspired by the Arabic term Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm which means the right path, presents this magazine as a means of guidance to a better connection to Allah, as well as offering the opportunity for connections with the broader community, and the improvement of one's self. Inshāʾ Allāh it can also serve as an opportunity for growing one's faith through education.

This magazine will be under the guidance and oversight of Moulana Nabi Raza Mir Abidi, Resident ʿĀlim of SABA Center, and several other scholars and experts.



and emmulate. They connect us, bring us joy and unify us. Our pride is in Islam and being Muslim. In Islam, there are no distinctions between Arabs or non-Arabs, black skin color or white, male or female, or being part of different tribes - there is only God-consciousness (taqwā) and obedience to the All-Mighty. This is not something which we can judge or measure - only Allah (swt) can do this.

To the parents: As parents, we face many challenges, and our challenges are not about Shīʿah and Sunnī. We are living in a very different time and in some areas, a very dangerous time. Our children are becoming atheists, falling into depression, contemplating suicide, experimenting with drugs, and are considering lifestyles outside of the traditional family, and so forth. We need to be smart and unite in order to be able to tackle these various problems.

To my dear respected scholars: There are extreme facts in history among both the Shīʿahs and Sunnīs, but we are not talking about those areas. We need to focus on the areas in history that show our great unity, and we need to promote those. The Muslim nation (ummah) is on one ship. If someone makes a hole in this ship, we will all drown. It doesn't matter who makes the hole because the ship will sink regardless of that. As scholars, when we use the pulpit (minbar) or podium, it is our duty to educate people on the common points of history, and how we were together and can be united and work together. It is okay to talk about our own jurisprudence (fiqh), but we have to be aware not to denigrate other views or put other peoples' beliefs down, or create a negative impression of individuals with different views. We can agree to disagree, but it has to be done respectfully.

To my dear youth and children: You are the pioneers of our communities. You are the ones who will hold the torch of Islam and take us to the next level. You need to be at the forefront - organizing, participating, and supporting this unity, and these types of programs.

Lastly to you, the general public: You are the nation - people united by your beliefs. You are the future, and the ones who motivate and inspire us. We work for you. Everything we are doing is for you. You need to be vigilant and demand the centers, Masājid, scholars, and educators to create the platform of unity. You are our compass, and you need to guide us.

We pray this letter and our magazine will assist everyone in planting the love of our Noble Prophet (ṣ) and his Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) in our hearts deeply. By following the right role models and serving the creations of Allah (swt) all around the globe, inshāʾAllāh we will earn the pleasure of the Almighty, and become closer to our Creator.

We pray that Allah (swt) gives us the ability (tawfīq) to actualize our duties and responsibilities.

JazākAllāh and Best Wishes,

Nabi R. Mir (Abidi)

SIGNIFICANT DAYS FOR THE MONTH OF RABĪʿ AL-AWWAL

8th	Death Anniversary of Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (ʿa)	*October 4th, 2022
17th	Birth Anniversary of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) and Imām Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa)	*October 13th, 2022

SIGNIFICANT DAYS FOR THE MONTH OF RABĪʿ ATH-THĀNĪ

8th	Birth Anniversary of Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (ʿa)	*November 5th, 2022

SIGNIFICANT DAYS FOR THE MONTH OF JAMĀDĪ AL-AWWAL

5th	Birth Anniversary of Sayyidah Zaynab (ʿa)	*November 30th, 2022
13th	Death Anniversary of Sayyidah Fāṭimah az-Zahrāʾ (ʿa)	*December 8th, 2022

*This is according to one of the narrations.

*Please note the above Gregorian dates are only estimates. The dates are subject to change based on moon sighting, upon which the Islamic calendar is based.

A Mercy to Mankind

By Shaykh Mateen Charbonneau

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّـهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّـهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّـهَ كَثِيرًا

Allah says in the Qurʾān: *"There is certainly for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent example for those of you who have hope in Allah, and the Day of Judgment, and who remember Allah very often."*[1]

Allah (swt) sent His Messengers to guide humankind and to make them aware of Him. They reform and guide humanity by showing them how to properly live their lives. People see the sublime character of the Prophet (ṣ) and are drawn toward his light wanting to be close to him and follow his path. Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) was known as a mercy to the entire world. Not only was his guidance a source of mercy for humankind, but through his example we are also taught how to be merciful toward one another. Being merciful is a characteristic that is innately loved. People gravitate toward those who are kind and merciful toward them. The Noble Prophet (ṣ) did not push people away by being harsh to them, rather he exemplified the best character traits when interacting with them. Allah (swt) says in the Noble Qurʾān: *"It is by Allah's Mercy that you (O Muḥammad) are gentle with them; had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have surely scattered away from you..."*[2]

Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) was the walking Qurʾān, meaning that he displayed the best example of how to apply the teachings of the Qurʾān in all aspects of our lives. One of the most basic ways that the Prophet (ṣ) did this was through his character. He lived according to the highest moral standards and possessed the most superior noble attributes. Allah (swt)

says in the Noble Qur'ān:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

"And indeed, you are of a great moral character."[3]

Even the Noble Prophet's (ṣ) enemies could not find anything bad to say about his character. Although they did not like him speaking against their idols, they still referred to him with the titles of: *aṣ-Ṣādiq* (the Truthful One) and *al-Amīn* (the Trustworthy One). The Prophet (ṣ) had a way of interacting with people such that whoever encountered him was captivated by his personality. One who learns about the life of the final Messenger (ṣ) is positively impacted by him, and cannot help but gravitate toward his beautiful message.

If we want to spread true Islam, then we must have the best of manners and good morals and etiquettes (*akhlāq*) especially when interacting with one another, and truly be a mercy for others. We must strive our best to emulate the Noble Prophet (ṣ) and the Imāms (ʿa) to the best of our abilities.

Imām ʿAlī ar-Riḍā (ʿa) said: *"Be good to all people whether they are worthy of it or not. Even if they do not deserve it, you should be worthy of doing good."*[4]

When it comes down to people in general, we have to treat them well, as all people have rights over us which are termed in Islam as: the rights of people (*ḥaqq an-nās)*.

Imām ʿAlī (ʿa) has been quoted to have said: "*Know that people are of two types: either they are your brothers (sisters) in religion, or they are your equal in creation."*[5]

When Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) came to Medina, the two main tribes there which were the Banī Aws and Banī Khazraj had been fighting for 120 years and were sworn enemies to one another. It seemed as if there was no way for this fight to ever end! There was no way these people would settle their differences! However, with the help of Allah (swt), the Noble Prophet (ṣ) was able to solve their problems by uniting them as brothers through the teachings of Islam.

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّـهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّـهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّـهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

"All of you hold fast to the rope of Allah (the Qurʾān and His Messenger) united and do not become divided; and recall the favor of Allah upon you when your hostility to each other had torn you apart. He united your hearts in one faith and through His Grace you became brothers. You were on the verge of falling headlong into the abyss of the Fire, but He saved you. This is how Allah explains to you His revelations so that perhaps you may be guided."[6]

I witnessed this with my own eyes in today's times. I have personally seen rival gangs who were sworn enemies of each other become the closest of friends and brothers under the banner of the love of Allah, His Messenger (ṣ), and the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa). This love unites us all by something even stronger than kinship.

The Prophet (ṣ) was also ordered by Allah (swt) to establish brotherhood between the *Muhājirūn* and the *Anṣār*. These were two groups of people in history who came from two different cities and backgrounds, but were brought together over their commonality of belief in Islam. The *Muhājirūn* were Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ), and his followers who migrated from Mecca to Medina. While the *Anṣār* were a group of local inhabitants of Medina who helped and supported the Prophet (ṣ) and his followers when they emigrated to Medina. One day the final Messenger (ṣ) turned to his followers in a general meeting and said: "*Now you should become brothers in faith in pairs."*[7]

In the book, *The Restatement of the History of Islam and Muslims*, it says: *"One of the first steps in the efforts of the Prophet (ṣ) to rehabilitate the homeless Muhājirīn in Medina, and to integrate them into the economic and social life of the city, was to make them 'brothers' of the Anṣār. A few months after his arrival in Medina, he told the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār that they had to live as 'brothers' of each other. ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (ʿa) alone was left without a 'brother.'*

He was wondering why when the Prophet of Allah (ṣ) held him by his arms and said to him: 'You are my brother in this world and in the next.'" [8]

The following verse was revealed as a result of this event:[9]

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّـهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

"The believers are each other's brothers. So restore peace among your brothers. Have fear of Allah so that perhaps you will receive mercy."[10]

"The Anṣār treated the Muhājirīn from Mecca better than the real brothers of the latter would have done. They lodged them in their own homes, gave them household items, made them partners in farming, or gave them half of their land. Those Anṣār who were in business, made the Muhājirīn their partners in business."[11]

Subḥānallāh! (Glory be to God!) How generous the *Anṣār* were! They treated their 'new brothers' better than their own relatives. They gave them half of what they had worked so hard for, in order to get them established in their new homes. This is what the Noble Prophet (ṣ) set out to achieve. He was sent as a mercy to humankind, and taught humanity how to be merciful and kind to each other. He came with a message to unite people upon the belief in the Oneness of Allah (swt). His message was universal - whether one be an Arab, a Persian, an Indian, a Roman, or any other ethnicity. The message of Islam transcends race, color, and ethnicity. The belief in Allah (swt), His Prophet (ṣ), and Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) unites all of our hearts and makes us one big family of believers. We are brothers and sisters to one another.

Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir (ʿa) said: "*A believer is the brother (or sister) of another believer [as if] from one's own mother and father."*[12]

Imām ʿAlī (ʿa) said: *"Be towards your brother (or sister) in such a way that if they disregard kinship, then you keep to it; when they turn away, be kind to them and draw near to them; if they withhold, spend on them; when they go away, approach them; if they are harsh, be lenient; when they commit wrong, think of an excuse for it as though you are a slave of them and they are the benevolent master over you. But take care that this should not be done inappropriately, and that you should not behave so with an undeserving person. Help your brother (or sister) in any case, go with them wherever they go and never retaliate against them even if they throw dust in your mouth."*[13]

Subḥānallāh! Look at to what great extent we are told to regard our brothers and sisters in faith! Imagine if we were to implement just this one narration - a narration that the Noble Prophet (ṣ) lived by. Our beloved Prophet (ṣ) was truly a mercy to humankind, and left us with a concept of brotherhood and sisterhood that goes beyond the limitations of physical connections. This will create such great harmony between us that will let us grow and thrive into a successful community built upon love and respect - this is an incredible example of mercy that our beloved Prophet (ṣ) had for us. He knew we would need one another, especially in these difficult times without direct access to our awaited Imām (ʿaj).

We have to genuinely care for people as our brothers and sisters in faith, and in this way we will be concerned about them and care about helping them. We should advise and help our fellow believers in faith whenever we see that they are in need. May Allah (swt) help us all to be more caring, kind, and patient with each other. May Allah (swt) allow us to become united as brothers and sisters under the banner of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) and his immaculate progeny, the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa).

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

"O our Lord, forgive us and our brothers (and sisters) who preceded us in the faith, and clear our hearts of any ill will against those who believe. O our Lord, You are All-Compassionate and All-Merciful."[14]

1 Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah al-Aḥzāb (33), Verse 21.

2 Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah Āl ʿImrān (3), Verse 159.

3 Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah al-Qalam (68), Verse 4.

4 Sayyid Muḥammad Suhufi, Lessons from Islam.

5 Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon #53.

6 Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah Āl ʿImrān (3), Verse 103.

7 Āyatullāh Jaʿfar Subḥānī, The Message, P. 298.

8 Sayed ʿAlī Asghar, The Restatement of the History of Islam and Muslims, P. 92.

9 Sayed Hashim Hussaini al-Bahrani, Tafsīr al-Burhān, V. 9, P. 86.

10 Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt (49), Verse 10.

11 The Restatement of the History of Islam and Muslims, P. 94.

12 Mizān al-Ḥikmah, Ḥadīth #424.

13 Abū Muḥammad ibn Shuʿbah al-Ḥarrānī, Tuḥaf al-ʿUqūl.

14 Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah al-Ḥashr (59), Verse 10.

يَا مَنْ اِسْمُهُ دَوَاءٌ وَذِكْرُهُ شِفَاءٌ، وَطَاعَتُهُ غِنًى، ارْحَمْ مَنْ رَأْسُ مَالِهِ الرَّجَاءُ، وَسِلاَحُهُ الْبُكَاءُ.

Yā man Ismuhu dawāʾun, wa dhikruhu shifāʾ, wa ṭāʿatuhu ghinā, irḥam-man raʾsu mālihir-rajāʾ, wa silāḥuhul-bukāʾ.

"O You whose Name is medicine, and whose remembrance is a cure, and whose obedience is wealth! Have mercy upon the one whose sole capital is hope, and whose only weapon is lamentation!"

يَا سَابِغَ النِّعَمِ، يَا دَافِعَ النِّقَمِ، يَا نُورَ الْمُسْتَوْحِشِينَ فِي الظُّلَمِ، يَا عَالِماً لا يُعَلَّمُ، صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، وافْعَلْ بِي مَا أَنتَ أَهْلُهُ، وَصَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَالأَئِمَّةِ الْمَيَامِينَ مِنْ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيماً كَثِيراً.

Yā Sābighan-niʿam, Yā Dāfiʿan-niqam, Yā Nūral-mustawḥishīna fiẓ-ẓulam, Yā ʿĀliman lā yuʿallam, ṣalli ʿalā Muḥammadin-wa āli Muḥammad, waf-ʿal bī mā anta ahluh, wa ṣallal-lāhu ʿalā Rasūlihi wal-Aʾimmatil-mayāmīna min ālihi, wa sallama taslīman kathīrā.

"O Giver of abundant blessings! O Repeller of adversities! O Light of the lonesome languishing in darkness! O untaught Knower! Bless Muḥammad and the Family of Muḥammad, and treat me as is worthy of You! May Allah bless His Apostle and the blessed Imāms of his Progeny, and give them abundant peace!"

فَإِنَّكَ قَضَيْتَ عَلَى عِبَادِكَ بِعِبَادَتِكَ، وَأَمَرْتَهُم بِدُعَائِكَ، وَضَمِنتَ لَهُمُ الإِجَابَةَ، فَإِلَيْكَ يَا رَبِّ نَصَبْتُ وَجْهِي، وَإِلَيْكَ يَا رَبِّ مَدَدتُّ يَدِي.

Fa innaka qaḍayta ʿalā ʿibādika bi ʿibādatik, wa amartahum bi duʿāʾik, wa ḍaminta lahumul-ijābah, fa ilayka yā Rabbi naṣabtu wajhī, wa ilayka yā Rabbi madadttu yadī.

"Indeed, You (O Allah) have enjoined Your worship on Your servants, commanded them to supplicate to You, and assured them of Your response. So to You, my Lord, I turn my face, and toward You, my Lord, I stretch my hand."

فَبِعِزَّتِكَ اسْتَجِبْ لِي دُعَائِي، وَبَلِّغْنِي مُنَايَ، وَلا تَقْطَعْ مِن فَضْلِكَ رَجَائِي، وَاكْفِنِي شَرَّ الْجِنِّ وَالإِنْسِ مِنْ أَعْدَائِي.

Fa bi ʿizzatikas-tajib lī duʿāʾī, wa ballighnī munāya, wa lā taqṭaʿ min faḍlika rajāʾī, wak-finī sharral-jinni wal-insi min aʿdāʾī.

"By Your honor, answer my supplication, and enable me to attain my goal! Do not cut off my hope from Your grace, and suffice me against the evils of my enemies from among the jinn and the humans."

يَا سَرِيعَ الرِّضَا، اغْفِرْ لِمَن لا يَمْلِكُ إِلاَّ الدُّعَاءَ، فَإِنَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِمَا تَشَاءُ.

Yā Sarīʿar-Riḍā, ighfir li man lā yamliku illad-duʿāʾ, fa innaka faʿʿālun li mā tashāʾ.

"O You who are quick to please, forgive the one who owns nothing but supplication, for indeed only You can do whatever You wish."

The Duʿā of Kumayl ibn Ziyād

VISITING MEDINA

Visitation (zīyārah) to our beloved Prophet (ṣ):

Peace be upon you, O Messenger of Allah.

Peace be upon you, O Prophet of Allah.

Peace be upon you, O Muḥammad (ṣ), son of ʿAbdullāh.

Peace be upon you, O Seal of the Prophets.

I bear witness that you conveyed the message of your Lord,

performed the prayers, gave alms, enjoined the right, and forbade the wrong;

and served Almighty Allah sincerely until death came upon you.

May the blessings and mercy of Allah be upon you, and upon your pure Household.

I bear witness that there is no god except Allah, the One and Only Who has no associate.

And I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger.

I bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah,

and you are Muḥammad (ṣ), son of ʿAbdullāh.

I bear witness that you conveyed the message of your Lord, offered your people good advice, strived hard in the way of Allah,

and worshiped Allah until death came upon you,

with wisdom and gentle advice.

And that you fulfilled the duty that was incumbent upon you,

acted compassionately to the believers,

and were firm of heart against the unbelievers.

Therefore, Almighty Allah exalted you,

to the most honorable position of the ennobled ones.

All thanks be to Allah Who saved us,

through you from polytheism and misguidance.

O Allah, (please do) pour Your blessings and the blessings of Your archangels,

Your commissioned Prophets,

Your righteous servants,

the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth,

and all of those who glorify You,

O Lord of the Worlds,

from the past and the coming generations,

upon Muḥammad (ṣ), Your servant, Your Messenger,

Your Prophet (ṣ), Your trustee,

Your confidant, Your most beloved,

Your choice, Your select,

Your elite, and the best of Your creation.

O Allah please give him an elevated rank,

and grant him the right of intercession for entering Paradise,

and raise him to a position of glory that all of the past and future generations will envy him for.

O Allah, You have said:

"And if, when they wronged themselves, had they come to you (O Muḥammad) and pleaded for forgiveness of Allah, and the Apostle had pleaded for them [to Allah] for forgiveness, then they would have surely found Allah All-Clement, All-Merciful." (Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah an-Nisāʾ(4), Verse 64)

So here I am, before you (O Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ)), asking for Allah's forgiveness, repenting from my sins, and seeking your intercession for me before Almighty Allah, your and my Lord, that He may forgive my sins.

Visitation (zīyārah) to Imām Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa):

Peace be upon you, O Imām of (all of) humanity!

Peace be upon you, O secure and lasting link of Allah!

Peace be upon you, O strong rope of Allah!

Peace be upon you, O bright light of Allah!

Peace be upon you, O the truthful Jaʿfar, son of Muḥammad (ṣ),

Treasurer of Allah's Knowledge,

O the true caller toward Allah!

O Allah! In the same way that You have chosen him to be the source of Your Words and Your Messages, the treasurer of Your Knowledge,

And gave him the language of Your Oneness, the ownership of Your Realm,

And made him the protector of Your religion,

send the best of Your blessings upon him,

The same blessings bestowed by You on Your proofs and successors.

Surely, You are worthy of praise and You are revered.

Sending Salutations (Ṣalawāt) upon Imām Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa):

O Allah, send blessings on Jaʿfar, son of Muḥammad, the truthful one,

the treasurer of knowledge, who truthfully called people to follow You,

the evident light.

O Allah, as You have chosen him to be the expert to teach Your "Words" and Your "Revelation,"

And (made him) a keeper of Your Knowledge, a caller to Your Oneness, an administrator to Your commands, and a protector to Your religion,

Please bestow blessings upon him - much more than You have bestowed upon any of Your close friends, and successors.

Verily, You alone are Praiseworthy and Almighty.

The True Guardians

By Shaykh Ehsan Ahmadi

إِنَّ وَلِيِّيَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۖ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ

"Indeed, my Guardian is Allah who sent down the Book, and He takes care of the righteous ones."[1]

Among the vital and fundamental questions in every human being's life is the correct and assured method of making the right decisions which will result in prosperity, felicity, and perfection. Typically, we tend to seek help from various sources including friends, family, experts, social media, etc. when we do research on a particular question. The vital quality which ensures an absolutely perfect answer to our questions is true and complete knowledge. This type of complete knowledge is one that encompasses everything, and it can only be found with Allah (swt), the Almighty. Our beloved Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) talks about this in the Noble Qur'ān where he is quoted as having said: *"Indeed, my Guardian is Allah who sent down the Book, and He takes care of the righteous ones."*

In another verse of the Noble Qur'ān, Allah (swt) commands the Prophet (ṣ) to say:

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ أَتَّخِذُ وَلِيًّا فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ يُطْعِمُ وَلَا يُطْعَمُ ۗ قُلْ إِنِّىٓ أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ ۖ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ

"Say: 'Shall I take [anyone] other than Allah as a guardian, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, who feeds and is not fed?' Say: 'Indeed, I have been commanded to be the first of those who submit [to Allah], and [was told] 'Do not ever be one of the polytheists.'"[2]

In another verse, Allah (swt) says:

وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ

"And you do not have besides Allah any guardian or helper."[3]

Therefore, the only true source that is there for every single one of us is Allah (swt), the Almighty. His sovereignty over His creations is unlimited, meaning it does not leave any room for anything else. Thus, every part of His creation falls within His Guardianship. Remember the phrase that is constantly

recited in Duʿāʾ Kumayl which is:

وَلا يُمْكِنُ الْفِرَارُ مِنْ حُكُومَتِكَ

"And it is impossible to escape from Your governance."[4]

This means that escaping from Allah's (swt) governance (guardianship) is impossible. There is no other source or helper to seek help from. But how should one seek Allah (swt) and submit to Him?

Allah (swt) says in the Noble Qurʾān:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُمْ رَٰكِعُونَ

"Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and those faithful believers - those who maintain the prayer and give charity while bowing down."[5]

Therefore, guardianship has been assigned to Allah (swt), His Messenger (ṣ), and those individuals who manifest the true image and reflection of the Almighty among His creations by acting exactly according to His commands, while expressing His love and care for other beings as well. These individuals are whom we refer to as the final Prophet (ṣ), and his Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) - the family of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ). This does not imply that the position of the Noble Prophet (ṣ) and his immaculate progeny (ʿa) is equal to Allah (swt), the Almighty. Rather, it is in fact a pure reflection and manifestation of His ultimate Power. They are the true images of Allah's (swt) creations, and the most noble of them. Therefore, the Guardianship of Allah (swt) manifests itself through these immaculate individuals.

Now one can understand why this phrase has been mentioned in various supplications:

مَن وَالاَكُم فَقَد وَالَى اللّه، و مَن عَادَاكُمْ فَقَدْ عَادَى اللّه، وَ مَن أَحَبَّكُمْ فَقَد أَحَبَّ اللّه، وَ مَنْ أَبْغَضَكُمْ فَقَدْ أَبْغَضَ اللّه

"Whoever accepts your (referring to the 12 Imāms) guardianship has accepted Allah's guardianship, and whoever becomes your (referring to the 12 Imāms) enemy has become the enemy of Allah, and whoever loves you (referring to the 12 Imāms) indeed loves Allah, and whoever hates you (referring to the 12 Imāms) indeed hates Allah."6

This is because expressing love and affection toward the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) will align a person with expressing love for Allah (swt), the Almighty, Himself. The more we gain closeness to them (ʿa), the more we will gain closeness to Allah (swt). The more we adopt their teachings and lifestyle within our own lives, the more we will submit to His commands and be pleased with His Will. This is due to their immaculate and superior status among all creations. Allah (swt) reminds us of this fact in the Noble Qurʾān where He speaks about how He has purified the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) as follows:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ ٱلرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ ٱلْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

"Indeed Allah desires to repel away all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification."[7]

There is a beautiful narration by our beloved ninth Imām, Muḥammad al-Jawād (ʿa), where he says:

أوْحَى اللّه إِلَى بَعضِ الأَنبياءِ: امّا زُهدُكَ فِي الدّنْيَا فَتَعجِلُكَ الرَّاحَةَ، وَ امّا انقِطَاعُكَ إِلَيَّ فَتَعزُزكَ بِي، و لكن هَلْ عادَيتَ لِي عَدُوّاً أو وَاليتَ لِي وليّاً

"Allah revealed to some of the Prophets: 'As for your asceticism in this world, this hastens your feeling of comfort; and, as for being cut off from everything but Me, you gain your honor through Me. But, have you taken My enemy as your enemy, or been loyal to My guardians?'"[8]

Here, the Almighty is talking to some of His Messengers, telling them that: You being ascetic in this mundane world hastens you toward true comfort. This means that not being attached to the material bounties or means of this world in reality will give a person comfort and ease. This sounds quite opposite to what the general norm is, which is seeking comfort from increased wealth and material possessions. However, we often forget that possessions and attachments have limitations, and they do not give everlasting happiness or peace.

Allah (swt) continues and says: "As for being cut off from everything but Me, you gain your honor through Me." Meaning that if we are truly seeking nobility and honor as we live our lives, then it will only be found through Allah (swt) and nothing else. That is the vital element to consider in making our decisions in life; knowing that true honor and nobility comes only from Allah (swt), and that it is exclusive to Him. This may not be the honor and nobility that is regarded

Daily Dhikr

There is a short dhikr associated with each day. It is recommended to recite the daily dhikr 100 times on that day.

SATURDAY

يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِين

Yā Rabba-l ʿĀlamīn
O Lord of the worlds!

SUNDAY

يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَ الْإِكْرَام

Yā Dha-l Jalāli wa-l Ikrām
O Owner of majesty and honor!

MONDAY

يَا قَاضِيَ الْحَاجَات

Yā Qāḍiya-l Ḥājāt
O Granter of wishes!

TUESDAY

يَا اَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِين

Yā Arḥama-r Rāḥimīn
O the Most Merciful of the Merciful!

WEDNESDAY

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوم

Yā Ḥayyu Yā Qayyūm
O the Living, O the Self-subsisting!

THURSDAY

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ الْمَلِكَ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِين

Lā Ilāha illa-llahu-l Malika-l Ḥaqqu-l Mubīn
There is no god except Allah, the Master of the clear truth

FRIDAY

اَللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

Allāhumma ṣalli ʿalā Muḥammadi-w wa Āli Muḥammad
O Allah, send blessings upon Muḥammad (ṣ) and the family of Muḥammad (ṣ)

in society, but one cannot gain true honor, or be bought or earned through a high-earning job, or a well regarded degree. True dignity lies only with Allah (swt).

Then, Allah (swt) continues in the above narration to the Messengers and asks (paraphrased for better clarity): *"However, have you made friendship with anyone for My sake? Or have you made enmity with someone because of Me?"*

The topic of love and hate for the sake of Allah (swt) is more important than being ascetic or detached from all material bounties and means in this world - even more than finding comfort and nobility.

Therefore, the above line from *Ziyārat al-Jāmiʿah al-Kabīrah* should be our mantra:

مَن وَالاَكُم فَقَد وَالَى اللّه، و مَن عَادَاكُمْ فَقَدْ عَادَى اللّه، وَ مَن أَحَبَّكُمْ فَقَد أَحَبَّ اللّه، وَ مَنْ أَبْغَضَكُمْ فَقَدْ أَبْغَضَ اللّه

"Whoever accepts your guardianship has accepted Allah's guardianship, and whoever becomes your enemy has become the enemy of Allah, and whoever loves you has indeed loved Allah, and whoever hates you has indeed hated Allah."

Here it is essential that we acknowledge the importance of expressing our love for the Imām of our time, Imām Ṣāḥib az-Zamān - may Allah (swt) hasten his reappearance - while also accepting his guardianship. The hearts of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) (including the living Imām of our time) are a means toward Allah (swt). Finding that personal connection to his beautiful heart which is filled with nothing except for love and concern for the entire creation, is the golden key that will help every single one of us make the right decision and walk the path of prosperity while living in this world. We do have to keep in mind that the path of love is not merely expressed by words, rather it is indicated by true actions which have to portray that true and sincere love. As Allah (swt), the Almighty, says in the Noble Qurʾān:

...الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّالِحاتِ...

"...Those who believe and do good deeds..."[9]

We should always keep in mind that Allah (swt), the Exalted, provides sustenance for the entire creation because of the Imām of our time (ʿaj), and it is because of him that the earth and the skies remain steady and functional.[10]

Therefore seeking the path of bonding with our living Imām (ʿaj) every day of our lives must become a priority for all of us. This can be achieved through a series of actions and deeds, as it is a gradual process. Making use of special times and places will benefit us as well, such as the month of Muḥarram, or at the Shrines of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa).

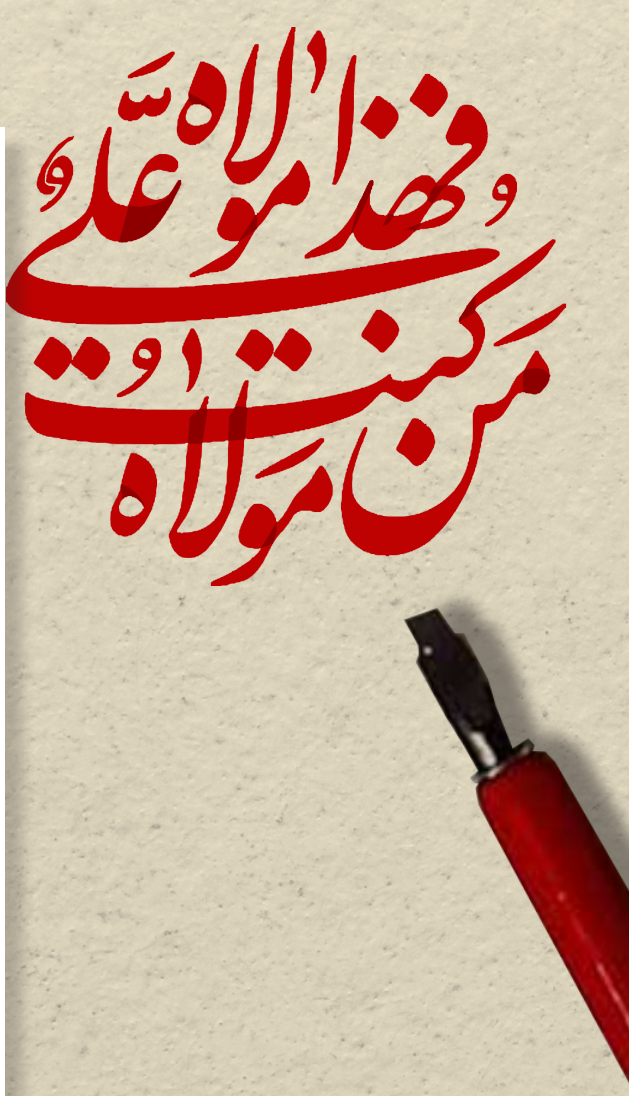
Here are some practical steps to achieve a deeper and more sincere bond with the Imām of our time (ʿaj):

1. Going for the visitation *(zīyārah)* of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa), and seeking intercession from them (doing *tawassul* to them). If one cannot physically go to the Shrines, then we can sincerely pay our respects from wherever we are.
2. Giving charity *(ṣadaqah)* on behalf of the Imām of the time (ʿaj), or doing any act of goodness and gifting that to the Imām (ʿaj).
3. Praying daily for his reappearance, health, and safety.[11]
4. Reciting *Duʿāʾ as-Samāt* just before sunset on Fridays.
5. Reciting *Duʿāʾ an-Nudbah* on Friday mornings, or *Zīyārat al-Jāmiʿah* anytime during the day on Fridays.
6. Reciting other supplications such as *Zīyārat Āli Yāsīn.*
7. The most important deed of all is to increase our piety and God-consciousness *(taqwā)*, and maintain it throughout our lives. This can be achieved through:

a. Staying away from sins.
b. Observing all of our obligatory religious responsibilities.
c. Performing our duties and obligations out of love and affection for Allah (swt).

8. Educating ourselves about the Imām of the time (ʿaj) and his attributes.
9. Allocating time in the midst of our daily activities to regularly talk with the Imām (ʿaj) in our own language even. We must also take account of our own actions every day, and remember that he is aware of everything that we do by the ability that Allah (swt) has given him.
10. When we want to make a decision in life, remember him, and ask which option he would be more content with.

Let us all raise our hands toward Allah (swt) and ask Him through His Mercy to grant every single one of us the ability to be listed as the true supporters and followers of the Imām of our time (ʿaj), and grant us all the bounty to have the true *maʿrifah* (in-depth recognition and knowledge of Allah (swt)).



1 Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah al-Aʿrāf (7), Verse 196.

2 Ibid., Sūrah al-Anʿām (6), Verse 14.

3 Ibid., Sūrah al-Baqarah (2), Verse 107.

4 Mafātīḥ al-Jinān, Duʿāʾ Kumayl.

5 Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah al-Māʾidah (5), Verse 55.

6 Ziyārat al-Jāmiʿah al-Kabīrah.

7 Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah al-Aḥzāb (33), Verse 33

8 Biḥār al-Anwār, Vol. 69, P. 238.

9 Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah al-Baqarah (2), Verse 25.

10 The Arabic of this tradition:
بِيُمنِهِ رُزِقَ الوَرى وَ بِوُجُودِهِ ثَبَتَتِ الأَرضُ و السّماء

11 (Biḥār al-Anwār, Vol. 53, P. 180)
أَكْثِرُوا الدُّعَاءَ بِتَعْجِيلِ الْفَرَجِ فَإِنّ ذَلِک فَرَجُكُم.

The Beacon of Mercy

By Zaineb Latif

Engulfed and drowning in the waves of desire
It's deep and murky, there's no chance to go higher

Hands flailing and outstretched, cannot be seen
darkness upon darkness covering like a screen

Corruption spreading throughout the land
Oppression rampant, a life none can stand

A creation that no angel or devil understood
It was only the Compassionate Creator who could

"I know what you do not," came the Creator's reply
"There's hope in mankind, that you so vehemently deny."

Creation cannot be judged by the material of its skin
A container has no worth without the secret within

And so with His mercy, He sent His light to mankind
To enlighten our hearts, helping us become refined

To warn and bring glad tidings of a spiritual goal
Consumption and pleasure can never satisfy the soul

Deep in our hearts we ache to grow and achieve
To have a purpose to live by, and something to believe

To reach moral perfection, and fulfill our divine fate
Embodying His noble character, becoming someone great

We all have a built-in understanding of evil and good
A yearning to achieve perfection, we know that we should

But we are lost wavering in a fog of confusion
Our intellect stalled by life's great delusion

When Allah's shining lantern was born into this world
He was heralded by angels singing praise as they whirled

Sent to wake up mankind and for the revolution to begin
To discover our destiny and to prove the light within

His light filled the earth and the universe across all time
Every Prophet brought good news of him in their lifetime

A mercy to mankind, an immense favor from the Lord
A man of great moral character whom everyone adored

An example of excellence in manners and conduct
A lesson on perfection for intellectuals to deduct

He walked amongst the people guiding to the Creator
Compassionate and caring, wanting all to achieve greater

His enemies hated him for his message, but had to admit
That he was kind and honest, no evil did he commit

He banished the shadows of ignorance and disbelief
Awaking mankind from a coma with the truth of belief

He brought knowledge, hope, and words of caution
He guided man to Allah's straight path and His devotion

He brought us Allah's words, a bottomless treasure
The Noble Qur'ān's abundant wisdom beyond measure

The message that completed all religions, was his to narrate
Inheriting from the past and downloading the final update

He was a guide for the believers of jinn and mankind
from his time till the end of the world's eventual decline

A spiritual father who cares deeply for our success
Sorrowful he becomes for all his nation's distress

Every time we emulate him, he responds with joy
He cheers for every believing one, girl and boy

And when we make mistakes, he will try to intercede
To Allah, for our forgiveness, he will surely plead

He is the pristine water that enlivens our parched souls
With him our thirst is quenched and hearts become whole

He rejuvenates the afflicted souls, sickened to death
From the corruption of sin, he revives their last breath

Without his message we would forever be
living a constricted life unfulfilled, unhappily

The love of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ), Islam's foundation,
as well as his family - peace be on them, is our salvation

Praise be to Allah for this mercy and blessed grace
To share His favourite light with us, the human race

Their love gives us value and for our hearts healing
With their love we become words filled with meaning

Our souls become part of the poetry that sings their praise
Merging into His infinite love, surrounded by their rays

Sūrah al-Fātiḥah

بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm

I begin, dedicate my action, and seek help with the name of Allah, the All Kind (general mercy), the All Merciful (mercy for the believers).

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّـهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾

Alḥamdu lillāhi Rabbi-l ʿĀlamīn

All praise is for Allah, Nurturer of the worlds.

الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣﴾

Ar-Raḥmānir-Raḥīm

The All Kind (general mercy), the All Merciful (mercy for the believers).

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿٤﴾

Māliki Yawmid-Dīn

He is the Owner of the Day of Judgment.

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾

Iyyāka naʿbudu wa Iyyāka nastaʿīn

(O Allah), only You we worship, and only You we seek help from.

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾

Ihdina-ṣ Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm

Keep us on the straight path (and keep guiding us).

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

Ṣirāṭ al-ladhīna anʿamta ʿalayhim

The path of those whom You have given Your blessings (like the Prophets, Imāms and Shuhadāʾ),

---

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٧﴾

ghayri-l maghḍūbi ʿalayhim wa laḍ-ḍāllīn

not those who are on the wrong path and have gone astray.

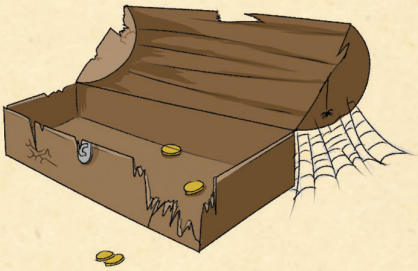
KNOWLEDGE VS. WEALTH

KNOWLEDGE IS BETTER THAN WEALTH BECAUSE

KNOWLEDGE PROTECTS YOU,

WHILE YOU HAVE TO GUARD WEALTH

WEALTH DECREASES IF YOU KEEP ON SPENDING IT



BUT THE MORE YOU MAKE USE OF KNOWLEDGE THE MORE IT INCREASES

Logic Puzzle

		SUBJECTS					LECTURERS					CLASS SIZE				
		Islamic Belief	Islamic Laws	Qur'ānic Science	Islamic History	Noble Sayings	Sheikh Murad	Sayid Jasim	Sheikh Jamal	Dr Graham	Dr Ghadeer	5	6	8	12	15
CLASS TIME	9:30															
	10:30															
	11:30															
	12:30															
	1:30															
CLASS SIZE	5															
	6															
	8															
	12															
	15															
LECTURERS	Sheikh Murad															
	Sayid Jasim															
	Sheikh Jamal															
	Dr Graham															
	Dr Ghadeer															

An Islamic School offers classes in a number of different subjects. Using only the clues below, match each class to its lecturer and scheduled time, and determine the total number of students in each. No option in any category will ever be used more than once. Answers can be found on the back cover.

Clues

1. The class with 12 people begins 1 hour before the Islamic Laws class.

2. The 10:30am class has 6 people in it.

3. Of the class with 15 people and the Noble Sayings class, one is taught by Dr Ghadeer and the other is at 9:30am.

4. The Islamic History class doesn't start at 9:30am.

5. The class with 5 people, the Qur'ānic Science class, and the 9:30am class are three different classes.

6. The Islamic History class, Dr Graham's class and the 10:30am class are all different classes.

7. Of the class with 15 people and the 11:30am class, one is taught by Sheikh Murad and the other teaches Islamic History

8. The Islamic Laws class begins sometime before the class with 5 people.

9. The Noble Sayings class is at 1:30pm.

10. The class with 6 people isn't taught by Sayid Jasim.

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Noble Qurʾān, Sūrah Sūrah al-Anbiyāʾ (21), Verse 107

Transliteration Guide

Arabic terms in this magazine have been transliterated according to the following guidelines:

ء	a, i, or u (initial form)
ء	ʾ (medial or final form)
ا	a
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	j
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	ʿ
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
و	w
ي	y
ة	h (without iḍāfah)
ة	t (with iḍāfah)
ـَـ	a
ـِـ	i
ـُـ	u

Logic Puzzle Answers

9:30	Islamic Beliefs	Sheikh Murad	15
10:30	Qurʾānic Science	Sheikh Jamal	6
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Glossary

Ziyārah: Visitation/pilgrimage to a holy site.

Raḥmatan lil-ʿĀlamīn: A title of Prophet Muḥammad which means: A mercy to all of the worlds.

Anṣār: They were a group of local inhabitants of Medina who helped and supported the Prophet (ṣ) and his followers when they emigrated to Medina

Muhājirūn: They were Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ), and his followers who migrated from Mecca to Medina.

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A Fresh Start

Spiritual Season

Connecting with Him